



Executive Policy

Chapter 1: Executive Policy and Procedure

Policy 1-80

Resource Contact: Joy St. Germain, Employee Services *Effective:* January 19, 2005

References:

- Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
- Civil Rights Act of 1991 as amended
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Federal Executive Order 11246
- Chapter 49.60 RCW
- Chapters 356 WAC
- Governor's Directive 98-01
- [Ecology Policy 1-31](#): Providing Equal Employment Opportunities
- [Ecology Policy 1-48](#): Establishing Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action
- [Ecology Policy 4-05](#): Managing Ecology Publications

Establishing Ecology's Commitment to Diversity

- Purpose:** This policy establishes and emphasizes Ecology's commitment to internal and external diversity practices, as they apply to Ecology's workforce and to Washington State residents.
- Application:** This policy applies to all Department of Ecology employees. It also applies to conducting outreach to the residents of Washington State and sets expectations for Ecology employees to disseminate information to residents and other interested parties.

1. Establishing Definitions.

Cultural Competency: A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. (Cross, et al., 1989; Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991)

Diversity: As defined and adopted by the Department of Ecology:

- **Diversity encompasses everyone.** All races and ethnicities; all cultural backgrounds; all ages; all family structures, lifestyles, and economic levels; all sexual orientations; all physical appearances; all military veterans; and all religious and personal beliefs. Diversity includes people with physical, mental, or sensory disabilities.
- **Diversity is both a trait and a goal for the agency.** As a trait, diversity describes a workplace in which the unique qualities, values, and perspectives of all individuals and populations are respected. As a goal, diversity advocates an agency workforce that

reflects the diversity of the people in the state of Washington who are served by the agency's operations and activities.

Environmental Equity (environmental justice): As defined by the League for Environmental Equity and Diversity (LEED), a subcommittee of Ecology's Diversity 2010 Committee (1994):

"Environmental Equity is the proportionate and equitable distribution of environmental benefits and risks among diverse economic and cultural communities. It ensures that the policies, activities and the responses of government entities do not differentially impact diverse social and economic groups. Environmental equity promotes a safe and healthy environment for all people."

Interpretation: The transfer of oral information from one language to another.

Primary Language: The language a person uses to think, function, solve problems, etc.; the primary language is the language a person chooses to be seen as embracing.

Translation: The transfer of written information from one language to another.

Workforce Diversity: The traits of workforce diversity are varied. They include, but are not limited to, race, gender, ethnicity, physical appearances, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status, economic status, job classification, work experience, educational background, military status, and work location.

2. Ecology is Committed to Diversity.

The Department of Ecology is committed to maintaining a highly skilled and diverse workforce that complies with all federal and state laws. The agency is also committed to conducting outreach to the diverse populations within the state and to providing services to these populations in a format that is comprehensible and appropriate for all citizen groups.

3. Ecology Maintains and Implements a Diversity Program Strategic Plan.

The Department of Ecology maintains and implements a Diversity Program Strategic Plan that is endorsed by the Senior Management Team and supported by all levels of management. The strategic plan includes goals and strategies for recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce within Ecology, as well as management accountability, training, and workforce planning. The strategic plan is considered to be a "living document" and is subject to updates and revisions as needed or as requested by Ecology's senior management.

4. Diversity Teams and Committees Work Together to Accomplish Diversity Goals.

Agency diversity teams and committees coordinate and work together to accomplish agency diversity program goals.

The **Diversity TEAM** is sponsored by the Diversity Manager/Employee Services Director, and led by the Diversity Program Coordinator. The TEAM is charged by Ecology's executive management to:

- Review the progress toward goals defined in the agency's Diversity Program Strategic Plan.
- Provide feedback and suggestions on improvements to the Diversity Program Strategic Plan.
- Review and provide input to programs, projects, and ideas being considered or designed by the Diversity Program Coordinator.
- Inform employees of the existence of the Diversity Strategic Plan. Ecology's Diversity Strategic Plan can be found at <http://aww.ecology/services/es/DiversityHome.htm>

The Diversity TEAM meets quarterly and as needed, and reports progress on achieving the goals outlined in the strategic plan to Ecology's Executive Management Team on a quarterly basis.

The **Employees' Diversity Committee (EDC)** is sponsored by the Senior Management Team, supported by the Executive Management Team, and comprised of a group of employee volunteers. The EDC promotes cultural competency within Ecology by assessment, communication, and outreach, and assists the Diversity Team with implementing the Diversity Program Strategic Plan.

The EDC helps support and further the agency's diversity program goals through:

- Increasing employees' awareness and understanding of cultural issues.
- Increasing employees' awareness and understanding of diversity issues
- Defining what it means for the agency to be culturally competent.
- Advising how planning activities, policies, program development, and funding decisions can result in culturally appropriate, accessible services to Washington's communities and families.

The **Multilingual Interpretation and Translation Management Guidance Team (MITT)** provides guidance and oversight to ensure the success of the Translation and Interpretation Review Teams (TIRTs). Executive management and the Diversity Manager/Director of Employee Services sponsor the TIRTs. (To request translation services, use the [MITT Translation/Interpretation Service Request Form](#).)

Translation and Interpretation Review Teams (TIRTs) are groups of Ecology employees assigned to provide translation and interpretation services within Ecology.

5. Ecology is Committed to Environmental Justice.

Ecology is aware of environmental justice (EJ) issues and dynamics when working with communities or when working with statewide policies that affect the public's health or a community's environment. The agency supports employees paying attention to environmental justice through the active internal use of the [EJ checklist](#). Ecology also supports ongoing participation with EJ efforts led by the Environmental Protection Agency and local governments in Washington State.

6. Language Needs Are Determined for all Information Intended for Public Distribution and Outreach.

Information that affects the residents of the state needs to be presented to citizen groups in the language considered to be their "primary" language. Program managers are responsible to ensure that information from their programs is reasonably available to all citizens affected by an outreach or agency decision. Program publication coordinators and public involvement staff verify language needs for the particular audience. Programs are responsible to request and pay for interpretation/translation services and to include this cost in operating budgets.

7. Translations and Interpretations of Agency Information are Performed by Existing Translation and Interpretation Review Teams (TIRTs).

Ecology has established Translation and Interpretation Review Teams (TIRTs) in select languages spoken by some Ecology employees. Program managers are responsible for seeing that translation and interpretation work is performed by employees who are current members of a TIRT for the required language. Each TIRT is responsible for establishing a certification process for the language they represent.

TIRTs are formed and dissolved as business needs and employee availability are determined. In the event that no Ecology TIRT exists in a needed language, programs are responsible for using outside interpreters or translators.

8. Oversight of TIRTs is the Responsibility of the Multilingual Interpretation and Translation Management Guidance Team (MITT).

Each TIRT has a management sponsor who is responsible for staffing the team at the appropriate level. The MITT is also responsible for establishing policy and procedures regarding service delivery, certification of team members, and providing tools needed by the TIRTs to do business. Membership on the MITT consists of management sponsors, the Diversity Manager/Employee Services Director, the Diversity Program Coordinator, and a representative from the Office of Communication and Education.

Approved:



Linda Hoffman
Director

[Back to Table of Contents](#)